

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – February 2, 2010

Washington, D.C. – With bi-partisan support from **U.S. Senator Richard Burr, U.S. Senator Kay Hagan** and **U.S. Rep. John Dingell, U.S. Rep. Brad Miller**

introduced today The Janey Ensminger Act to require the Department of Veterans Affairs to provide health care to veterans and their family members who have experienced adverse health effects as a result of exposure to contaminated well water at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

"It is estimated that more than a million Marines or their family members were affected by the toxic drinking water at Camp Lejeune," said **Rep. Miller**. "Janey's tragic story continues to play out again and again across our country. This House bill is the next step in acknowledging responsibility for the harm the water contamination has done, and providing justice for all those affected by it."

"The men and women who enter the U.S. military know they may see combat to protect their country, but never would they imagine having to battle bureaucrats and lawyers representing the very nation they were willing to die for," said **Rep. Dingell**.

"The Camp Lejeune contamination cases have put our heroes in a position of fighting the military, in some cases for their lives or their families' lives. We will continue to fight for these brave men, women and children who should not suffer the way Janey Ensminger did. Her father, Jerry Ensminger, has made it his life's mission to obtain justice from the military for the contamination he, his family, and his colleagues endured while serving in the Marine Corps, and

this legislation is a good step in that direction. I want to commend Congressman Miller, Senators Burr and Hagan, as well as my Michigan colleague Bart Stupak, for their work to get the many Camp Lejeune victims the care and compensation they deserve."

The House legislation is modeled after S 1518, The Caring for Camp Lejeune Veterans Act of 2009 which is being championed in the Senate by Senators Richard Burr and Kay Hagan.

"For too long, our federal government has denied Camp Lejeune veterans and their families justice in this tragic situation. We have a solemn duty and moral obligation to take care of those who were put in harm's way while serving our nation," **Sen. Burr** said. "This bill, and its Senate companion, would provide Camp Lejeune veterans and their families the health care they deserve. They have waited long enough, and I am proud to join Congressman Miller as he introduces this important legislation in the House of Representatives."

"We need to help these former Lejeune families get answers about water contamination at Camp Lejeune," **Sen. Hagan** said. "This legislation we are pushing in Congress will give these families access to health care while we continue to press the Navy to fund the critical Centers for Disease Control studies. Completion of these studies will help bring the families the closure they deserve."

Marines and their families who lived at Camp Lejeune between 1957 and 1987 drank and bathed in water contaminated by various "known human carcinogens" including Trichloroethylene (TCE) and Tetrachloroethylene (PCE), benzene and vinyl chloride. In some cases the contamination was as high as 280 times what is currently regulated by the Safe Drinking Water Act.

The bill is named for Janey Ensminger, a 9-year old girl who died from childhood Leukemia in 1985 after being exposed to the water at Camp Lejeune while in utero. Her father, 24-year Marine Corps veteran Jerry Ensminger is a tireless advocate for military families.

"It is my hope that some day soon this tragic situation will be resolved and all of us will finally be allowed to achieve some much needed closure and justice," said **Ensminger**. "May God bless Janey and may God bless you for bestowing this honor upon her."

###